

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



**Inter-Collegiate Lectures
2017-2018 Academic Year**

‘Charity begins at home’: The University and the Delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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Date: 12 April 2018
Venue: Centre for African Wetlands
Time: 3:00 p.m.

Chair: Prof Daniel Asiedu
Provost, College of Basic and Applied Sciences

Programme

Opening Remarks by College Secretary: Mr. E.O. Baidoo

Introduction of Speaker by Chairman

Deliverer of Address by Speaker

Questions and Comments

Chairman’s Closing Remarks

University Anthem

Abstract of Presentation

This paper seeks to analyse the synergies, congruence and interlinkages between the actions and key performance indicators of the current University of Ghana Strategic Plan and the targets, actions and indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals. The purpose of this analysis is twofold, to establish how the University can mainstream the SDGs into its operations where there are gaps, but also to contribute to the global discourse on the SDGs from a ‘southern’ perspective in terms of approaches and relevance of the SDGs to an academic setting.

The University of Ghana has always been visionary in environmental thinking. In 1990, the then Vice-Chancellor, Prof Akilakpa Sawyer was one of the original 22 signatories of the Talloires Declaration, a declaration for sustainability among like-minded Universities. In 2013, the University became part of the Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability (GUPES). The current strategic plan of the University (2014 -2024) is aimed towards the vision of “*becoming a world-class research-intensive university*” within the decade. The University Strategic Plan seeks to deliver the vision through nine strategic priorities. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),

otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Building on the Millennium Development Goals, the SDGs have 17 pillars, 169 targets and 230 indicators and some more indicators are still being developed

Standard methods of rapid assessment of SDG mainstreaming, which involved a mapping approach that examined the alignment of the existing priorities of the University with the individual Goals and Targets of the SDGs, the alignment of University Academic Research units and the SDGs and an assessment of the SDGs being targeted by research units have been used. It is clear from the results that the University of Ghana is very much in tune with the SDGs and much of its research by graduate students contribute to the data and evidence needed for their achievement. However, there are some areas where the University can contribute more.

Jeffery Sachs notes that '*universities need to play a role as active solutions networks ... helping society to find technical solutions to achieve these goals*'. As a research university, The University can use SDG related criteria such as – impact, paradigm shift, sustainable development, needs of the recipient, ownership, efficiency and effectiveness as a key framework against which project proposals and research directions are assessed. The University can also incorporate SDG case studies, learning material, examples and concepts into its courses and programmes, in such a way that teaching philosophies, learning outcomes and attitudes acquired can contribute to the next generation of policymakers and scholars leading to the 'future we want'. This, in the long run, may be the most important contribution of the University to the Global Goals as it is attitudes and behaviours which control the use of technology and adoption of solutions.

Finally, at the institutional and operational levels, the University can integrate SDGs consistently in new social and environmental policies, as well as review existing policies and operational guidelines to encompass the basic philosophy of the SDGs, which can be encapsulated in the phrase 'leave no one behind'.

Key Words: Strategic Planning; Sustainable Development Goals;
Research: Education: Green Growth